The Seed Sower.

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My Children.

Lord, thou didst give them to my care,
Their sunny heads are pillowed on my breast;
Their dimpled hands cling round my neck;
My arms are close about them now,
And fain would hold them thus for ever.
And yet it may not be:
I must loose their clinging clasp
And put them down,
That they may go the way thou leadest.
Still, I pray that thou lead softly;
Lord, their little feet are tender!
Oh, sometimes lift them in thine arms,
And bear them, when the way is rough.
When they falter, lead them gently on;
And bring them safely to the journey's end.

LILA FROST SPRAGUE.

On a Late Spring.

Chained is the Spring. The night-wind bold
Blows over the cold earth;
Time is not more confused and cold,
Nor keeps more wintry mirth.

Yet blow, and roll the world about,
Blow, time; blow winter's wind!
Through chinks of time heaven peepeth out,
And Spring the frost behind.

G. M.

Christianity in Presence of Modern Criticism.*

A SERMON,

BY THE REV. BROOKE HERFORD, D.D.

"Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever."—*Heb. xiii. 8.*

The greatest work of our age in the realm of the higher thought has been, I suppose, the re-establishment of the religious philosophy of the universe. While material science, by the exactness of its processes and the brilliancy of its results, has been tending towards explanations of Nature and of Life which have seemed to account for all without God, or soul, a phalanx of thinkers, at the head of whom has stood our own James Martineau, have been pressing home a deeper analysis, and have shewn that all true investigation of Nature or man leads back to the old Divine mystery. So much for religion in its abstract greatness and mysteriousness. But

* Preached before the Provincial Assembly of London and the South-Eastern Counties.

what about the Christian religion? The place of Christianity has been as the clearest and divinest revealing of religion. And all the while that science and philosophy have been labouring over the fundamental question of any religion at all, there has been another range of criticism and enquiry as to the special character and claim of Christianity. It is this question that I would speak of to-day. One cannot, of course, go over the whole ground of modern criticism; but I would specially consider this part of it—as to how much of Christ and Christ's teaching is being left to us as any reliable guide and help.

1st.—As to how far modern criticism has affected our knowledge of what Christ really was and what he taught. There has been a widespread impression that the fuller Biblical scholarship of to-day has been shewing that in reality we know very little about Christ, that the Gospels, instead of being almost contemporary accounts, are only traditions, not written down as we have them till long afterwards; that consequently they cannot be depended upon; so that, in fact, all the seemingly clear outlines of that figure to which the world had been bowing down are melting away into a haze in which it is impossible to make out anything clearly. One used to hear people say sometimes that it is even doubtful whether any such person as Jesus ever really existed; and many still imagine that anyhow there is very little known about him. But is this the result of modern criticism? I think I might say that the real result is almost exactly opposite to this. This was, indeed, what was at first announced as going to be the result. It is rather over 60 years since the great German critic, Strauss, startled Europe by his great book on "The Life of Jesus." You know it challenged the whole story of Christ. It evaporated the whole thing into a series of myths. Strauss supposed these myths to have grown up in the early Christian communities about the memory of a person who might indeed have lived, but had nothing of this remarkable kind about him.

Perhaps it was well that the very most that criticism could possibly do should have been thus announced at once, for it forced universal attention. It set every thinker in Christendom investigating the matter. Of course, timid people, ostrich-like, hid their faces, and would not admit that there was anything to be investigated. In the main, however, the facing of the question was fair and thorough. But what has been the result? Simply, that Strauss's mythical theory has been practically rejected by the scholarship of the world. It was not large enough for the facts. That there are elements of myth in the Gospels is likely enough, but that the whole character of Christianity should be a myth, formed about some common-place life, was too impossible to be maintained. Nay, within four years Strauss himself had to modify his own theory, and while he still maintained the details of Christ's life to be myths, he admitted that the Jesus about whom such myths had grown up must have been the supreme religious genius of the race! Well, the scholarshp of the world, taken broadly, may be said to have accepted that correction—that Jesus must have been the supreme religious genius, and has been working ever since at the problem of how far the detailed accounts of him can be depended upon. Well, on the one hand, the old idea that the Gospels are absolutely infallible records, in which everything must be taken exactly so, is now practically gone. On the other hand, all idea that they are forgeries, or cunningly-devised fables, is utterly gone also. What the scholarship of the world has been coming to is about this: that the Gospels (certainly the first three) are the honest, *bonâ-fide* accounts of Jesus as they were handed down among his followers, and gradually shaped into set form. From time to time, amid all the criticism on this or that special point, some writer has flashed in a light which has seemed to illuminate the whole subject. Such an epoch-making book, I think, was "*Ecce Homo,*" which seemed to show how any mere Messianic consciousness with which Jesus had begun had grown out into the larger "enthusiasm of humanity" which looked out beyond the Jews, and inaugurated the Kingdom of God as a new Divine society for mankind. Such another work which looked as if it might begin a new epoch was Renan's "*Vie de Jesus,*" which reproduced, with extraordinary power and fascination, the spirit and surroundings of that Christ-age, and dealt with the Gospels with all the freedom which the furthest-going criticism could desire, but which, somehow, reconstructed the central figure of Jesus in too sentimental and Frenchified a style, without the moral and spiritual greatness which alone could transmit such an

influence into history. And many another writer might be named: Keim, Hausrath, Farrar, Furness, to mention a few only. There have been more attempts in our day to depict the life of Christ than in all the previous ages together. Of course, in all there has been something conjectured, because all the sources of our knowledge are fragmentary. It is the standing problem of history to piece together these fragments in the way which, without straining or violence, shall restore that life in true proportion to the impression it made on those around, and to the influence it has had upon the world. Exactly how early the very Gospels were written is still unsettled. But this is noticeable: almost every literary discovery of late years has been in the direction of putting them a little earlier, not later, than at first supposed; and whatever the exact date, this has been coming out more and more clearly that the main picture of Christ's life, in all its great moral and spiritual features, may be depended upon. You have to allow for some exaggeration—as with all ancient lives—and quite as often you have to allow for belittling, as the recollection of what he said and did passed through smaller minds; but when all that is done the fact remains, and is coming out more clearly every day, that we have a fuller, closer picture of Jesus Christ than we have of almost any other life in the ancient world. Some critics object, indeed, that if there is mistake and exaggeration, we cannot separate the true from the false. But that is not really so impossible, becuse we know exactly the direction in which the exaggeration was going on. It was in the direction of an ever-increasing celestial glorification of Christ, exalting him more and more above that simple humanity in which he really lived among men, until they had fully deified him into that awful, majestic figure, the Second Person in the Godhead, whom the creeds expounded and the church enthroned. That is the simple fact about the whole idea of Christ having been God, which, when it had won the mind of the world, has been hard to dislodge. It was all the addition of after ages; it grew up when Christianity was spreading among heathen peoples, who were familiar with the idea of God's coming down to earth. This Jesus must have been such an one, they said, and so the idea grew. They thought they were honouring him, but really they were overlaying and hiding the real Christ of Nazareth beneath a glittering pile of heavenly glories. There is only one good thing in all that glorifying process. It was like the dust and ashes which buried Pompeii out of sight, but in burying it preserved it! You see, those early ages were so busy working out the equation of Christ's heavenly glory that the story of his earthly life passed with little notice, was hardly meddled with at all. And so you put aside all that glittering Christology of the Creeds and look back to the Gospels, and there that earthly life and ministry remains, just as men used to tell it in the earliest Christian age of all! And so that central figure stands, its main features hardly touched by criticism; that figure which has so impressed itself upon the heart of the world—Jesus of Nazareth—who went about doing good, with his great thought of how the world might be the happy Kingdom of God, and trying to draw all men to it; Jesus of Nazareth, with that simple, unconstrained, loving-kindness which drew to him those from whom others shrank away, which spoke words of hope to sinners and outcasts, and took up little children in his arms to bless them; Jesus of Nazareth, with his pure eyes that seemed to look into the very face of God and to see the realities of eternity; Jesus of Nazareth, with his great, wise words of duty and kindness and trust; and all ending in that cross on which the light that glowed through his whole life was focussed to an intense and awful brightness! All this life-image of Christ stands as firm and clear as ever. Criticism may show that some of his words have been dislocated, and that some of the Gospel incidents may be doubtful; it may even, as some think, evaporate all miracle into myths of wondering love; but the main features of that great life and its deep character and spirit remain, really just as certain as ever, the great human fact at the head of the religious development of mankind.

But still, when it is recognised that all the criticism of our time has really left us Jesus Christ, the question still remains, what about his teaching? Granted, the unique quality of that life-image which the Gospels pourtray, not in biographical exactness, but with wonderful and untouched vividness, yet that alone is not enough to place him at the head of the great religious teachers of the world. And, indeed, the very variety of the systems which have grown up in his name have been one of

the difficulties of those who have been trying to make out what the world really owes to Christ the Teacher. "Do you," says the critic, "mean the simple Christianity of the Catacombs, or the splendid Ecclesiasticism of the Papacy, the Christianity of the Anglican Prelatists, or of the Puritans whom they cast out, or of the Quakers whom both Prelatists and Puritans alike excommunicated? Do you mean the Christianity of the Sermon on the Mount, or of the Nicene Creed? Do you mean the Christianity of Calvin, or the Christianity of Servetus whom he burned? And when you have fixed on some one of these types, how much of its thought and of its ways are to be claimed as distinctively Christian? Because there is a great deal that has commonly been ascribed to Christ which can also be found in other religions and other great teachers. The Vedic hymns sing of God as the Universal Spirit; Confucius has the golden rule; Marcus Aurelius teaches human brotherhood; and all religions inculcate more or less of charity. True, but all this does not affect the world's debt to Christ. His great thoughts were not new, it has been urged. Well, but how should they be entirely new? How could they be? There are no new truths. The truths of God, the duties of man, are as old as creation, were inherent in creation. The supreme value to the world of any prophet-teacher lies in the simplicity and force with which he singles out the supreme things, and emphasises them for the reverence of mankind. And the way in which Christ did this has kept coming out more and more. Those Vedic hymns sang of the Infinite Spirit, and those who sang them by and by forgot their meaning in the grossest polytheism! Christ said, "God is a Spirit," and the world has never forgotten it, and that word is a life-force still to-day! Marcus Aurelius talked beautifully of kindness and forgiveness, and though he had the prestige of an emperor the world of Rome moved on and took no heed! Jesus of Nazareth said only the same things, if you will—with no prestige at all—but they touched a few lowly hearts with a power which, by and by, thrilled through that same great world of Rome, gave a new start to human history, and is still working, a live, real force to-day. No, Christianity might not be altogether new, but it is none the less a great, distinct, living reality! And as to the variety of forms which it has seemed to assume in different lands and ages, these, too, are no real difficulty. They make Christianity more difficult to define, impossible, if you will, to define exactly. Yet, really, they are in the very essence of so great a movement. Its very vitality has diffused it among so many varieties of human nature, gathered to itself all sorts of human character, grown up into all sorts of institutions. Something like the great gulf stream, its current of warmer life has swept through history—raising the moral temperature of life, though you cannot say exactly how much; making many a land more fertile, though you may not be able to point to a single growth that has been due to it alone; carrying forward the life of our race, though you can never absolutely distinguish its force from the other forces of progress. No, you cannot exactly define Christianity, and every system which professes to do so, and would exclude all else, bears its condemnation in its very littleness; but you can see enough in it to judge of the extraordinary power there must have been in it to be still mingling strongly with the currents of the world; you can see enough, too, to trace it to its source in that life and influence of Christ; and you can see enough to judge of its direction—that it is working towards goodness and kindness and helpfulness, and all simplicity of religious thought, and love to God and man.

I know that there are some who would admit what I have claimed to be this confirmative result of criticism, with regard to Christianity, who would still put aside all idea of discipleship to Christ or Christianity as a mistake. They would simply put Jesus among the other religious leaders of mankind, and keep all teachers in reverent view, but without any special allegiance to him more than to others. I know that there seems a certain logical simplicity in such detachment, but I rest in the large fact of what the world's creative and developing force has made the order of man's onward life to be. As personality is the highest thing in life, so great personalities are the highest forces in history. It is so in the movements of nations, systems, religions. It is such personal leaderships and lordships which give in every part of life the intensest inspiration and the clearest point. So this discipleship to Christ, this clinging of our religious life to him, this loving to hold up his words before us, this sense of a certain reveal-

ing light in his discerning of Divine things, yes, and growing out of this, our feeling of its being good to weave in the symbols of his name and work amidst our own work and worship, all this is not the refuge of religious feebleness, it is God's provision to help us to religious strength!

Ah! I know I do not feel it, we none of us feel it, enough. Perhaps that is the severest criticism which Christianity has had to face in this keen, practical age, that with all its high ideal of purity, and peace, and brotherhood, it has failed to realise it! Why does it not change this law? Why does it not stop these wars and those oppressions? Why does it not find the poor work and better homes? Why does it not "make all things new?" True, too true! Very slowly the tide of the world's mending moves, with many cross-currents and back-waters! And yet, as I look along the ages, I see that this is the only great, continuous movement that has ever aimed at the reforming of the world, and still to-day it is the only one that, in small things and in great, touches society with a thousand restless longings for the better, happier life of man, and keeps the heart and thought of myriads facing towards a goodness which they do not attain!

Yes! here is the essence of the whole matter. Our best life is not that which we live alone, or which each age lives alone, Our best life is that in which we draw together, and in which we link ourselves, and lose ourselves, in the great fellowship of the ages. And still, after all the keenest proving and criticism of our time, that great fellowship which began in Christ, and still continues in his name, stands as the best. Of course, it is not all it might be, and one great part of our work in holding to it is to clear away that which is unworthy! In our very pleading for Christianity we have to point men away from the Christ of the Creeds and back to the greater Christ of the Gospels! There is our strength—to speak the ancient word of simpler truth, not just as ours, but his, and in his name. I love that name—I believe it is still the strongest name on earth to rally men to the simplest faith and the most practical righteousness! I would cherish it in our working, I would cherish it even in our praying. It is no talisman to give some mystic efficacy either to the prayer or to the work, but it is the strong, great name that links us with the noblest memories of the past and the noblest prophecies of the future. Yes, "in his name!" That holds before us the loftiest ideal; that stirs us to sacrifice and patient service for the help of man; and that is the perpetual reassurance of our simple faith; and that the faith which he proclaimed of old in Galilee is surely going to win at last, and to be the light, and gladness, and uplifting of the world!

Inter Amicos.

(AN IMAGINARY INCONSEQUENCE).

It was after one of our denominational gatherings. We had lunched together in a quiet café all by ourselves, and the conversation, after wandering over many themes, settled for a while on the *Hibbert Journal* symposium, "On the Alleged Indifference of Laymen to Religion."

"Yes," said the *Advanced One*, "Mr. Jacks may have asked the right question, pity he didn't throw out some hint of an answer. The other papers are, as you say, curiously inept. Even the last, with its masterly avoidance of a constructive declaration, strikes a pessimistic note not justified by the discord between the ideal and the actual. After all, it is this discord that makes life a battle, and gives the fighter that *gaudium certaminis* which overcomes pessimism. What warriors wish to avoid is not discord—without discord life would not be worth living!—but the paralysing doubt which questions whether they are making their glorious discord in the right interest. We looked to Mr. Jacks to give us an assurance, and he has plunged us into the deeper doubt. But to leave these weightier matters, there is one little point that should not be forgotten; laymen are sick of the verbal refinements of theologians—this perpetual clothing of heresies in the venerable vestments of orthodoxy."

At the word "vestments" the *Ritualist* became suddenly alert, but soon relapsed again into inattention. Nothing short of a real issue interested him.

"Take Abbé Loisy's 'Gospel and the Church,'" continued the speaker. "He twits Harnack for not condemning the worship accorded to Christ, while regarding it all the same as a kind of idolatry born of ancient polytheism. But Loisy himself is only more frankly given to the same kind of idolatry. He admits—urges, that for the first Christian generation

Jesus was not a being to be worshipped. 'Neither the worship of Christ nor the worship of the saints could be part of the Gospel of Jesus, nor does either belong to it.' I remember the exact words," he continued, "'they arose spontaneously and have increased one after the other, and then together in Christianity as it became established.' In other words, the worship of Christ grew up; it does not form part of primitive Christianity. In accordance with the principle of development, the Abbé justifies it, and as an extension of it he justifies also the worship of the Virgin and the Saints."

"Well, that's bold enough for you, isn't it?" asked the *Free Catholic*.

"Bold enough!—yes; but plain men demand plain language. What they want to know is—was Jesus God or was he not?"

"Plain men," interposed the *Ecclesiastic*, "should be guided, I suppose, by their ministers, as they are guided by their lawyers and doctors."

The *Ecclesiastic* failed to switch the discussion on to his favourite topic of authority.

"Isn't it the fact," said *Free Catholic*, "that you can't possibly put the matter in that blunt way? Secularism may say that Jesus was a man just like one of ourselves—or like the waiter who will answer this bell—and from one point of view that is an unimpeachable platitude. But the theologian has to say that the waiter is a divine being. This is the one transfiguring truth that Liberal Religion finds it worth while to fight for. Surely it makes all the difference in the world whether you interpret the waiter in terms of divinity or divinity in terms of the waiter. I always think that the really fundamental distinction between secularism and religion is that religion interprets the lower in terms of the higher, whereas secularism interprets the higher in terms of the lower."

"In other words," broke in the *Literary Man*, "secularism stands on its head and worships its feet, while religious humanity stands on its feet and worships its head."

No one paid any particular attention to this flippant interruption. But it gave *Advanced* his opportunity to persist.

"It is this very talk of divinity and incarnation and so forth that is so frightfully confusing to plain men."

"So much the worse for plain men," said *Ecclesiastic*, impatiently. "You can give them language and argument, but who can give them education and brains? Shall we let their inability to understand the ordinary terminology of theology prevent us from giving facts their true names?"

"But where will religion be," said *Free Catholic*, reprovingly, "unless it can win the plain men? Did you notice, by the way, that the results of the London County Council election show that practically all the Progressive victories were in the East and in those districts where we have no churches or only languishing ones—a terrible comment it seems to me? But coming back to the point, I should like to ask *Advanced* how he can avoid speaking of divinity and incarnation when these terms are of the very currency of contemporary theological language?"

"Oh! but it is precisely against the re-issuing of these old clipped coins that I protest. We have done so much to call them in; let us melt them down—melt them down, and then re-mint them, if necessary, with a plain understandable inscription."

"You can't fool about with great words in that way," said *Ecclesiastic*, "without fatal impoverishment of the religious vocabulary."

"I suppose," said *Free Catholic*, "that every intelligent man knows that when a Liberal theologian speaks of the divinity of Christ he is speaking of a fact that is true in degree of all men. It is this very quality of divinity which we must preserve. After all, all the great truths of religion are truths of degree. We say, for example, that the Bible is inspired. This is true of all high literature. Cease to speak of the Bible as 'inspired,' substitute other words, say it is a remarkably fine collection of writings, the best in the world, and sooner or later we lose sight of what constitutes its greatness. So the secularist denies the genuine inspiration of Habakkuk in order to affirm the infallibility of Haeckel!"

The *Ritualist* had now become interested and joined in.

"The real point of all this," he said, with an air of conclusiveness, "the real crux is not met in running up and down a scale of degrees. Not *met*," he added, emphatically, "but *evaded*."

"I mean," he continued, "that the vital issue is never one of degree, but of kind. You must preserve the special uniqueness of holy books,

holy men, holy times, holy places, holy functions, or you fall to pieces. That is why we are such a fissiparous body. Take the Sunday, for example. To the secularist all days are alike. He won't make your distinction of degrees of sacredness. Here comes *Advanced*, and talks truisms to him about all days being equally sacred. What happens? Instead of Monday being seen to be as holy as Sunday, the Sunday becomes as profane as Monday. 'The factory should be as sacred as your chapel,' he says, hoping to capture his plain men. But his chapel is as sacred as—as this café. That is why our congregations 'worship in the fields,' in motor-cars and on bicycles. Everywhere and every time is sacred, they say, meaning, of course, nowhere and no time. Depend upon it to 'universalise' is only to evaporate and dissipate. Every characteristic feature is disembowelled and religion is lost in a cadaverous abstraction."

He was getting animated. "It is all due to your universalising scientific theology which refuses to recognise facts—the particularity of facts. You will never have a sacred week-day, or improve the attendance at public worship on Sunday, until you make the Sunday something set apart, unique, and special."

"You mean," said the *Literary Man*, with an excessive innocence, "you must make the whole week Sunday-centric?"

"I mean," said the *Ritualist*, hotly, "that you must have special observances of holy days, and give to them their own unique and special significance."

He was becoming reckless, and went on in a torrent.

"You must have consecrated temples, consecrated priests, sacramental functions."

"I don't think it would be wise to let that come to the ears of Unitarians of the proud-of-the-name-type," said the *Literary Man*, soothingly.

"Unitarian! Proud of the name!" exclaimed the *Ritualist*, pretty well excited by this time. "I am proud of the name; I would fly the flag everywhere, cut the word into the stonework of our chapels! But I don't see what that has to do with my plea for a calendar of holy men and holy days, differing from others in kind as well as in degree."

"But that is only to justify Loisy," said *Advanced*. "Your out and out Liberal Roman Catholic could, along those lines, advocate the worship of saints, and of one in particular."

"In a sense," replied *Ritualist*, cooling down, "in a sense I agree with Loisy. Roman Catholicism is at least more consistent than Free Catholicism. It is intelligible [*Advanced* chuckled] and the worship of Jesus as a kind of Comtist *Grand Etre* is a great improvement on the Pagan worship of Nature."

Free Catholic felt it was time to defend himself.

"Just as Christ-worship overcame Nature-worship, I think the day will come when Spirit-worship will overcome both by including both. We may worship God in Nature, God in Christ, God in our own souls," he said, with an almost incongruous solemnity in his voice, "without worshipping Nature, or Christ, or great men, or our own selves."

"Words," quoted the *Literary Man*, sententiously, "are the counters of wise men, the money of fools."

"Don't you think," retorted the *Ritualist*, with some asperity, "that even words have a certain sacramental efficacy? I believe Bacon would have been nearer the mark had he said that words were the money of wise men and the counters of fools. To play with symbols as if they were merely counters is to play with fire—and only children and fools play with fire."

"Talking of the Baconian theory," began the *Literary Man*, abstractedly—but the meeting had suddenly dispersed.

J. M. Lloyd Thomas.

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*Memoirs of Dr. Priestley.**

By all true lovers of Priestley this little volume, in its new dress, will be hailed with delight, and we congratulate its editor, the Rev. Frank K. Freeston, upon the production of a memorial so appropriate to the occasion which has called it into existence.

The book is very similar in size to the original, from which it is taken, but the type is smaller and the pages somewhat wider. It comprises the autobiography, written in Birmingham, down to 1787, and its continuation, written in America, down to March 24th, 1795, and between the two is inserted an account of the riots of 1791, taken from Mrs. Catherine Hutton Beale's "Reminiscences of a gentlewoman of the last century." The book continues with the account of Priestley's life from 1795 to his death, written by his son Joseph, omitting some portions of the original, and by way of conclusion to the volume the editor has given us the catalogue of books written by Priestley, which is also appended to the original memoirs. A glance at this catalogue will itself give the reader a birds-eye view of the life and work of this wonderful man. The interspersion among the text of 16 illustrations adds a great charm to the book. They are taken from photographs and engravings, &c., and the reproductions (on glossy paper) are nearly all of them exceedingly good. The Oxford statue is one of the best, and the Fuseli and Artand portraits are the least successful, but these may be merely a matter of defective printing. Five of the pictures are of Priestley's friends; the remainder relate to Priestley himself. The Birmingham and Leeds statues represent the discovery of oxygen; but will some scientific reader explain what Priestley holds in his left hand upon which the sun's rays are concentrated by the burning-glass? The foot-notes are useful and commendable for their brevity, unlike Rutt's edition of the memoirs, where the foot-notes are more extensive than the text. Mr. Freeston has apparently taken the numbers of the paragraphs from this edition, in which they were used to distinguish the memoirs from the rest of the text, and we think they would have been better left out on this occasion, as they serve no useful purpose in the book before us. The unsigned notes are supplied by Mr. Freeston, the remainder being taken from the original memoirs. In his preface he says: "The Centenary of the death of Dr. Priestley has suggested, and indeed rendered necessary, this

* Memoirs of Dr. Joseph Priestley, written by himself (to the year 1795), with a continuation to the time of his decease, by his son, Joseph Priestley. Reprinted from the edition of 1809. H. R. Allenson, London, 1904. 3s.

reprint of his autobiography." We quite agree as to this necessity for a reprint when we bear in mind that there has been none as far as we know since 1833. The Autobiography was first published in London in two octavo volumes, in 1806 and 1807, with observations on Priestley's writings by Judge Cooper, of Pennsylvania (formerly of Manchester), and the Rev. William Christie, formerly of Montrose, and this is spoken of generally as the American edition. This was followed in 1809 by the reprint from which the volume now under review is taken. It was published in London by "the several Unitarian Societies in England," and was an unpretentious looking volume in plain boards, with no illustrations, and no doubt intended to be widely circulated. In the following year, 1810, a similar reprint was brought out in Birmingham, and another one, also in Birmingham, in 1833, the centenary of Priestley's birth. The illustration facing page 87 is copied from the frontispiece of this book. In 1831 and 1832 appeared Mr. J. T. Rutt's edition already mentioned. These are two octavo volumes, and contain the same memoirs as before, with other matter by the editor, numerous interesting letters, and very voluminous foot-notes. Mr. Freeston's volume is therefore the fifth reprint of the Memoirs originally published in 1806.

"Few articles of self-biography can be more attractive than what we owe to his pen. In the following pages he lays before us, with the simplicity and frankness which always marked his conduct, what he was, what he did, and what he suffered; and who but must warmly admire his cheerfulness of temper, his fortitude of purpose, his unconquerable love of truth, his signally vigorous and active powers of mind, ever accompanied by deep, habitual, enlightened pity, and by the spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance? Who but must admit that he was an eminently great and good man; as illustrious by his private virtues as by the wide extent of his knowledge, and by the variety and force, the diversified and valuable application of his talents?"—Thus wrote "J. K." in the preface to the 1833 edition of the Memoirs, and the words are as true to-day as when they were written.

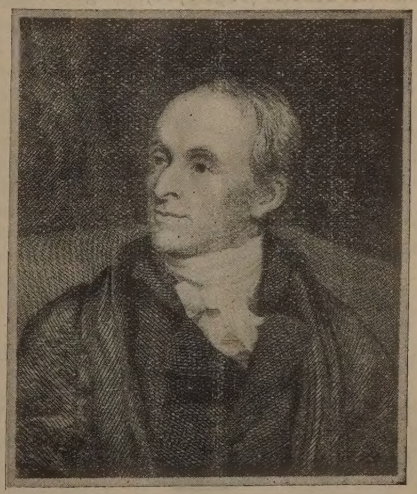
HERBERT NEW.

Our Old Chapels.

XVIII.

DOB LANE, FAILSWORTH.

What's in a name?—a bald, blunt, curt name; a dumpy, lumpy, scrimpy name, like "Dob" Lane! Nothing to the unwitting, but everything to the members of its old chapel and congregation, and now something, surely, to every reader of its History.* It is to one of the most zealous members of the congregation, Mr. T. F. Robinson, that this History owes its inception, and it is to our chief chapel historian, Prof. Gordon, that it owes its completion. Our heartiest thanks to both of them, for they have rescued many facts from confusion, if not oblivion, and this was well worth doing. Manuscript records in the possession of the congregation (other congregations copy, please), and manuscript reminiscences of various dates



PENDLEBURY HOUGHTON.

by former and present members, have supplemented the printed records with much advantage and interest. A chapel which has numbered Pendlebury Houghton, Lewis Loyd, William Stevenson, and George Walker amongst its

* "Historical Account of Dob Lane Chapel," by Alexander Gordon, M.A. Manchester: Ranson & Co., New Brown Street.

ministers or stated supplies; Armitages, Barratts, Taylors, Allens, Partingtons, Pollitts amongst its workers and worshippers has no small claim on our notice.

Dob Lane Nonconformity dates back directly from the ejectment of the Rev. John Walker, M.A., by the Act of Uniformity. He was then minister at Newton, was followed by Thomas Lawton, a Conformist but a Puritan, and hence the Nonconformists seem to have attended his services; but on his decease a definite separation took place, and in the year following came the Act of Toleration, which allowed them to hold their own meeting. After meeting for some time in a barn, they erected their first chapel building in 1698, with a trust permitting "the edifice to be used for a place of meeting of Protestant Dissenters, for the public exercise of religious worship, according to the liberty of the Toleration Act." Its ministers were Nathaniel Scholes (1691-1702), "ingenious and

GEORGE WALKER, F.R.S.

serious;" Joseph Heywood (1700-1713), one of Frankland's students; William Perkins (1713-1724), during whose ministry the Jacobite rioters broke the pulpit, pews, and windows; Henry Knight (1724-1739), in whose time the chapel house was begun; Benjamin Sandford (1740-1745), who left during the Jacobite rebellion; Titus Cordingley (1745-1756), Robert Robinson, D.D. (1756-1777), an eccentric and irate divine, who reduced the congregation to two families, locked the chapel doors for three years and kept the keys; Pendlebury Houghton (1779-1781), a distinguished Warrington student and tutor, who served afterwards at Norwich and Liverpool; William Hawkes (1781-1785), another Warrington student; Lewis Loyd (1790-1792), assistant tutor at the Manchester Academy; William Stevenson (1792-1796), father of Mrs. Gaskell; George Walker, F.R.S. (1801-1803), mathematical tutor at Warrington, principal of the Manchester Academy, and, for twenty-four years previously, minister of the High Pavement, Nottingham; David Jones (1803-1825), under whom the Sunday School was begun by Benjamin Goodier; James Taylor (1832-1847), who came from Rivington; James Hibbert (1847-1851), Abram Lunn (1854-1858), Joseph Freeston (1858-1864), William George Cadman (1867-1872), Halliwell Thomas (1875-1885), and George Knight, who has occupied the pulpit for nearly nineteen years.

The Old Chapel was closed and taken down in 1878, after doing service for near 180 years. The present chapel was opened in May, 1879, and the new schools were opened in November, 1887. In 1898 the congregation held a Bi-centenary Celebration, when special commemorative services were conducted by the Rev. Charles Hargrove and the Rev. Joseph Freeston.

The entries in the old Register of Baptisms and Burials, extending from 1701 to 1807, are printed *literatim*, adding greatly to the value of this little volume. It should be purchased for all our chapel libraries, and for private ones no less. A knowledge of Nonconformity, and the study of our own history were never more necessary than to-day. F. K. F.

Notes and Jottings.

The chief event of general religious interest during the past month has been the Centenary of the Bible Society. It has been celebrated wherever the English language is spoken, and for once seems to have united all sections of the religious world, with the exception of the Roman Catholics. The history of the Society

has been written at length, and also in a popular form, by Mr. Canton; and attention has been called once more from innumerable pulpits to the power of the Scriptures.

We should like to believe that all this enthusiasm is likely to lead to a revival of Bible reading and a new sense of the importance, especially of the New Testament, for the ordinary Christian. The traditional affection for the Bible may remain, but it is not known as it used to be, and life is much the poorer for the loss. Criticism and rational views of authority and inspiration have come to stay, and the danger now is not in the direction of superstitious reverence, but rather in that of a foolish neglect. When all has been said and done, account for it how we may, there is in the Bible something unique from the point of view both of Christian history and of personal experience. Perhaps our free pulpits suffer in the truth of their appeal because they do not recognise this fact, or are too ready to make little of it. It is certainly part of the spiritual power of the best preaching to-day, as it has been in the past.

Congregation at Oxford has taken a remarkable step forward in the direction of theological freedom. On March 1st a proposal was carried by 123 votes to 73 to abolish the rule restricting the office of examiner in the Honours School of Theology to men in priest's orders. Many of the best places in this examination are won by students who are not members of the Church of England, and it seems only logical to make it possible for these students in subsequent years to be themselves examiners. Of course, the proposal was resisted by the Church party, who see the last relics of special religious privilege slipping from them; and there can be little doubt that a strong effort will be made to annul it in Convocation, where the votes of the country clergy count for so much. The recent appointment of Professor Peake, himself an Oxford man and a Nonconformist, to the chair of Biblical Exegesis in the University of Manchester, is an interesting commentary upon these cross-currents of religious feeling at Oxford.

The result of the County Council Election in London is significant and encouraging. In spite of the organized attack in the interests of an Ecclesiastical party, the Progressives have been returned with their large majority practically unimpaired. The attempt at clerical dictation was ominous, but it has only recoiled upon the heads of its originators. The average citizen, whatever his religious opinions may be, has a wholesome dread of ecclesiastical interference in mundane affairs. He is open to the influence of religious teaching and ideals, but he resists stoutly any attempt to make him the tool of a religious policy. Not only the friends of education, but all who value the sacred liberties of citizenship, have reason to be grateful to the Church party for its bad tactics.

The tension in Wales over the administration of the Education Act has reached an acute stage. The whole country, through its representatives on the County Councils, is in a state of passive resistance. The Government may proceed by mandamus and commit some of the recalcitrant Welshmen to prison. Perhaps it will welcome the opportunity of doing something vigorous in the last stage of its decay. But no one can imagine that there is the slightest possibility of forcing an educational policy upon Wales, to which the people are actively hostile. Mr. Balfour's attitude only reveals the depth of his detachment from the realities of the situation.

We called attention last month to the need of using the present fashion in sixpenny books in the service of Liberal religion. Messrs. Macmillan have just issued sixpenny editions of "Ecce Homo," and a volume of "Religious and Scientific Addresses," by Archdeacon Wilson. To both we give a hearty welcome. Professor Percy Gardner's Jowitt Lectures, "A Historic View of the New Testament," have also appeared in the same cheap form. Both in print and paper it is among the best sixpenny editions that we have seen. Some of our churches might do worse than start a book stall for literature of this description. A very small capital would provide quite a large stock, and the religious reading of not a few of us needs to be encouraged in these days.

THE BIRMINGHAM CREMATORIUM.

Cremation and the Birmingham Crematorium.

III.

A view of the Birmingham Crematorium is given at the commencement of this paper. It is of an ecclesiastical character, in brick and stone, with tiled roof. The chapel is about 50ft. long by 25ft. wide, and about 40ft. high, with an open timbered roof. On each side of the chapel are columbaria (for the reception of cinerary urns) which may be purchased as a resting-place for ashes when it is desired they should remain there permanently. The catafalque is against the end wall of the chapel, opposite the entrance, and stands on a stone platform. Immediately beyond are the iron doors leading to the ante-chamber, through which, after the committal sentence in the service, the coffin is noiselessly removed by invisible mechanical means, and passes on to a steel carriage in the ante-chamber and thence into the furnace. Complete combustion is obtained without smell or direct contact of the body with the fuel. The ashes, untouched by human hands, are removed through a small aperture into the urn placed to receive them, and can be delivered at the expiration of about three hours, or on the morning following the cremation, to be placed in the family vault or disposed of as the relatives desire. The friends of the deceased may appoint whom they please to officiate at the funeral service, as the chapel is available for any form of service or ceremony. Already ten cremations have taken place, and a number of columbaria have been sold. Much has been said as to the cost of cremation being greater than that of earth burial, but it is thought this will not be the case when the practice becomes more general. All information on the subject of cremation at the Birmingham Crematorium, with the scale of fees, may be obtained from Mr. M. N. Phelps, Hon. Sec., 19, Newhall Street, Birmingham.

Reference must be made to the general Act of Parliament passed last Session, and to the regulations framed by the Home Secretary for carrying out its provisions. It is entitled "*The Cremation Act, 1902.*" "An Act for the regulation of the burning of human remains, and to enable burial authorities to establish crematoria," and came into operation on the 1st of April, 1903.

Amongst other things it provides—

That no cremation of human remains shall take place except in a crematorium, of the opening of which notice has been given to the Secretary of State.

That no human remains shall be cremated which have not been identified.

That the powers of a burial authority shall include the provision and maintenance of crematoria, under certain conditions, and subject to regulations to be made by the Secretary of State. These regulations have been made and published, and apply alike to all crematoria erected or to be erected. *Forms accompany the regulations*, as follows:—

A. Application for Cremation.—This is to be made by the executor, whenever practicable, but may be made by the nearest surviving relative of the deceased or any other person who can show a satisfactory reason why it is not made by the executor or nearest relative. It contains exhaustive enquiries to which replies must be given, and must be verified by declaration made in accordance with the Statutory Declarations Act, 1835, and also stamped.

B. A certificate of the medical man who attended the deceased in last illness.

C. A confirmatory medical certificate, which is to be made by a registered medical practitioner of not less than five years' standing, holding one of certain appointments enumerated.

D. The Coroner's certificate, after *post-mortem* examination.

E. The Coroner's certificate where an *inquest* has been held (this is alternative, and will be accepted in lieu of Forms *C* and *D*).

DD. Certificate of medical man who was present at the birth of a still-born child.

F. Authority to Cremate.—This must be given by the medical referee or his deputy, who are permanent officers appointed by each cremation authority under the Act of Parliament, and who are notified to the Secretary of State. He is to examine the forms prescribed and to satisfy himself (amongst other things) that deceased did not leave written directions against cremation. That (except in case of a Coroner's certificate given in Form *D*) *the death has been duly registered* in form provided by the Registrar-General in case of burial. He is also to satisfy himself, by examination of the application and certificates, that they are such as are required; also, that the fact and cause of death have been definitely ascertained, and if the cause of death assigned in the medical certificates be such as might be due to poison, violence, or to any illegal operation, or to privation or neglect, he is to require a *post-mortem examination* to be held, and if the cause of death is not then revealed, he is not to allow the cremation until *an inquest has been held* and the Coroner's certificate furnished in Form *E*. If it appears that the death is due to poison, violence, an illegal operation, privation, or neglect, or if there are any suspicious circumstances whatever, he is to refuse to allow the cremation unless an inquest be held and a certificate is given by the Coroner.

These regulations are felt by many to be unnecessarily stringent, and are characterised in the annual report of the Managers of the Liverpool Crematorium as "somewhat complicated formalities." The ostensible reason was to "prevent loss of evidence by the process being used for the persons who had come by their death unfairly, mainly by poison. This has all along been the only objection to the system, sentimental ones apart, and has been carefully guarded against, certainly in Liverpool, and it is believed equally so elsewhere, and there has never been a suspicion that the precautions used were insufficient. But, based on this overstrained idea, troublesome, unnecessary, and irrelevant requirements, have been forced on the management, and these are believed frequently, and known in some instances to have turned the scale against cremation. It is to be lamented that this course was taken in the case of so distinct a social improvement, for which encouragement might have been expected."

The following statement of cremations in England and on the Continent during 1901 may not be without interest:—

England	445
France	807
Germany	698
Switzerland	127
America	2685
Italy	274

As knowledge on the subject of cremation is more widely diffused, and the public realise the safeguards which have been imposed by the Legislature in regard to the mode in which it is to be carried out, any remaining prejudices on the subject will probably disappear, at any rate to a very large extent, and that it will be accepted (to use the words of Sir Henry Thompson, the veteran pioneer of the movement, which have already been quoted) "that cremation is by theory" (and it may be added in practice) "the quickest and safest mode of reducing the dead body to its original elements, the end of which is obtained slowly, and not without danger to the living, by burial in the earth."

CHARLES HARDING.

Thoughts from Germany.

IV.

Consider, too, for a moment, the indebtedness of the thinking world to German metaphysics. When religious philosophy in this country was at its very lowest—when the melancholy conclusions of Hume, and the mechanical theology of Paley and Priestley were the generally accepted views of educated men, from a great German thinker, Immanuel Kant, came a new and nobler teaching, opening up fresh vistas of divine reality in the universe and in the soul.

Instead of the self-satisfied, cock-sure, clear but shallow estimate of existence which our eighteenth century men affected, Kant disclosed depth and beauty and unfathomable mystery. His influence on English thought was immense—only comparable with that of Wordsworth on poetry, or of Scott on fiction. Through Coleridge, Carlyle, and Emerson, it has been spread into various forms of culture —theology, poetry, history, economics. Other German thinkers, second only to Kant, have been such men as Fichte, Lotze, and Hegel, to whom modern religious philosophy is indebted at every turn. To Germany, more than to any nation, is due the belief of most thinking men of the present day that *reason*, if faithfully followed, leads man, not as was once supposed to negation and chaos, but to order, meaning, and God. And in so far as Germany herself contains a larger number of educated people than any other country she is not a stronghold of Atheism. Rationalism there does not spell irreligion—though it is inconsistent and in conflict with the orthodox religious teaching. The professors and the preachers, as I have said, are at variance. They represent respectively motary and stationary forces. Educated laymen are chiefly with the professors, and they rarely go to church. As in England, the word "parson" is too often associated with "muff," intellectually, and the male population, in the absence of the fine old service and good music which here to some extent compensate for lack of brains in the pulpit, are more and more averse to public worship. Of the eleven hundred students at Jena, I suppose a score may be seen at the parish church on Sunday morning; whilst the heretical Professor Harnack, in Berlin, can draw an enthusiastic audience of some six hundred students to his class-room to hear a lecture on the "Essence of Christianity." The contrast is instructive. As a professor told me the other day at Marburg, young Germany is not irreligious, but it will not put up with the "old dogmas."

Why, then, do not liberal-minded believers unite and organise a Free Church among themselves?

Why, indeed! Here we come upon a real difference between Germans and ourselves, and a real weakness, as it seems to me, in their national life. They lack that independence and self-reliance which have been the special characteristics of our *Dissent*. When, more than two hundred years ago, we found that we could not have liberty in the Established Church, we withdrew from it, abandoning our share of the inheritance. Our Dissenting forefathers faced the problem of building churches and supporting a ministry of their own, not only without State aid, but in spite of the unjust laws and persecution of the State. And something of their brave individuality has trickled down to their children. We are accustomed to be slighted and snubbed. We take it as a matter of course that we should work in a corner, without influence, and take a back seat. It has happened so long that perhaps we do not feel it, and are somewhat surprised that anyone should greatly mind; and we, therefore, do not properly sympathise with the dread of the public to take part with us. In Germany there is little or no Dissent, and the prospect of starting a denomination, and supporting it, not only with their money, but by the sacrifice of old associations and social position and influences, strikes ordinary Germans as something positively overwhelming. I have a letter from the wife of a German professor, telling me of the anguish of soul she endured in severing her connection with the Lutheran establishment and throwing in her lot with a little free religious community, which had a short and painful career in one of the University cities. I am afraid the answer of most religious reformers in Germany to the suggestion that they should leave the State communion would be—"Why should we abandon it to the other party? Why should this historical and powerful heritage be left to the people who are behind the times, and are losing touch with modern knowledge and experience?" Of course, there is great weight in

the argument. It is the position of the Broad Churchman in England to-day. But the impotence of the broad men in the Anglican Church might be a sufficient refutation. Nothing less than a social upheaval, similar to Luther's reformation itself, could compel the establishments of Germany and England to abolish their doctrinal tests, and open their pulpits to men of modern thought. English voluntaryism foresaw this two centuries since, and it is a lamentable fact that it was not recognised in Germany too. If religious liberalism there is to get into the pulpits it must learn the bitter lesson our ancestors taught us. It must relinquish its hope of "the loaves and fishes," and be content to be, in a worldly sense, poor and obscure, a black sheep, if sheep at all, in the Christian fold, misunderstood by the general, left politely in the cold by those who ought, by conviction, to be its supporters, and satisfied to do a small work in a very limited circle.

And would this do it harm? Possibly, to some extent, yes. Men who have to stand alone are apt to be opiniated, querulous, and somewhat priggish. On the other hand, it would develop their moral courage, train their will, give them self-reliance, deepen their convictions, and throw them more completely on the sympathy and love of God. Very real, and sometimes stern sacrifices are demanded of those who will serve the right and true, but the possession of the right and true is itself, and for what it brings to character, an abundant and blessed compensation.

EDGAR I. FRIPP.

Guild News.

We have received from America an interesting Year Book of the First Unitarian Church, Toronto, which contains, among other information, an exceedingly suggestive account of the proceedings of a society called the Unity Club, to which all those who are young in spirit—and wish to stay so—are invited to belong. Last year the club joined the Young People's National Religious Union and adopted a programme almost wholly religious and philanthrophic. Meetings are held on Wednesday evening, fortnightly, in the social rooms of the Church, and are free to all whether members or not. Each alternate meeting is preceded by an informal supper and social hour. Then, after devotional exercises, there is an address or essay on some prearranged topic, followed by an open discussion. The subjects, which are exceptionally attractive, are chosen almost entirely from the yearly list published by the Central Society, of which we had a very interesting account in our president's (Rev. Joseph Wood) message while on his recent visit to the United States. The social events of the year include an autumn outing, a "corn-roast" in September, a reception to new members in October, a Christmas entertainment to home-comers in December, a sleigh-ride and supper in January, a valentine party in February, a hard-times party in March, and a picnic in May. The purpose of this club is threefold: religious—for study, devotion and active work; social—to cultivate acquaintanceship and sociability among the young people of the congregation, and to show hospitality to strangers; and intellectual—to diffuse useful information, stimulate inquiry and promote general culture. The various lines of work are carried out by means of the committees named below. The membership fee is 50c. a year. All young people who are in sympathy with the objects of the club are eligible. The sub-committees include, "Look-out and reception," "Religious work," "Social and entertainment," "Literature and art," "Flower and needlework," "Philanthropy" and "Sunday School."

Turning to a less distant Guild, we hear from Leicester that the Great Meeting Guild of Fellowship have now concluded their study of Fiske's "Man's destiny," which has proved most interesting and profitable, under the leadership of the President (Rev. E. W. Lummis). Since January the subject under consideration has been the "Life and Times of Dr. Priestley." Members and friends have contributed excellent papers on "England in 1750," "The Breach with the American Colonies," "The French War and Nelson," "The Life of Dr. Priestley," "The Birmingham Riots," "The Theology of Priestley." It is proposed to conclude this part of the programme with a social evening, at which lantern slides (illustrating Priestley's career, kindly lent by Rev. F. K. Freeston) will be shewn.

News from the Field.

We notice, with pleasure, a new departure among us. *Miss G. von Petzfold, M.A.*, has been called to the ministry of the Harborough Road Congregation, *Leicester*, and has accepted the call. She is an accomplished scholar and an excellent preacher, and her career will be watched with great sympathy and hope. We see also that *Miss Mellone* has been occupying some of our pulpits of late. Are we at the beginning of a new era when women's great powers and deep devotion are to be turned into a new channel?

The *Rev. Philemon Moore* is going back to his old chair at *Carmarthen*. He has spent some years in Germany in further prosecution of his studies, and will bring to his old work enlarged powers and culture, which should be rich in benefits to the students in the Welsh College.

It is pleasing to note that *University College, London*, has called to its new chair of Moral Philosophy the *Rev. Dr. Dennis Hicks*. A better man could not have been selected, and both the College and the Professor are to be congratulated.

The *Ancient Chapel, at Liverpool,* has again found a minister out of the ranks of progressive congregationalists. This time it is the *Rev. Charles Craddock.* He brings with him a good reputation and will find a cordial welcome among his new compeers.

The *Rev. N. Anderton* and the *Rev. F. B. Mott* have been cordially received at *Pendleton* and *Southport*, and enter upon their new spheres amid good wishes and warm greetings.

Up almost as near to the North Pole as he could get, the *Rev. A. Webster* has gone carrying his glad gospel of religious life and freedom into the stronghold of Calvinism, and has had a reception which will encourage him to go again, and he has sown seeds which cannot help bringing forth a rich harvest in coming days. We rejoice to see this strong and devoted man at our northernmost citadel, so ready to go out under his bold banner to carry his great message of goodwill even as far as John o' Groats. We shall hear of him soon among the ice-ships making their way to the North Pole, so that not even the solitary souls who are straining after geographical conquests there shall be left without the glad tidings of a glorious faith.

Dr. Warschauer is pounding away at "Nunquam" in the *Inquirer*, and using heavy shot against the daring frigate that is carrying so much dismay into the fleets that sail in the summer seas of orthodoxy. The Doctor will be hearing, and perhaps feeling, some heavy shots in return.

We hear that the *Old Meeting, Birmingham*, has been prodigal in its welcome to the *Rev. Joseph Wood*, on the resumption of his work among them, and that large congregations have listened with delight to his voice once more. The ministers of the Midlands have taken various opportunities of saying how glad they are that he is among them once more.

Professor Knappert, of Leiden, has been paying a flying visit to the *Dutch Church in London*, and to *Oxford*. He meant to have gone further—to Sheffield among other places—but the pressure of duties called him home very speedily and shortened his visit. But it was pleasant to see and hear him.

The *East Cheshire Union* and the *Midland Christian Union* are both appealing to their friends for a large sum of money to enable them to carry on their work with renewed activity. Each is seeking at least £5000, and there seems to be reasonable hope that success will crown the efforts which are being made. Both are seeking personal subscriptions and both are arranging for bazaars in the autumn—one in Manchester and the other in Birmingham.

The *Mansford Street Mission, London*, has had an encouraging annual meeting. The *Rev. John Ellis* is a vigorous type of missionary, and is making himself felt as one of the moral and spiritual forces in the Metropolis.

At *Merthyr Tydfil* services are being held in the *Theatre Royal* with great success.

The *Ulster Unitarians* have had their anniversary. They were in good spirits and cheered each other, but they had no record of new work, nor any scheme for missionary enterprise. Some day there will be a bursting forth of energy which will carry our friends into "fresh woods and pastures new."

The *London Sunday School Society* has had an excellent meeting, and valuable papers were read by *Miss C. A. Lawrence* and the *Rev. Saville Hicks* on "the use of the Bible in Sunday Schools." No doubt these will be printed in full so that a larger number than those present at the meeting will have the opportunity of studying the suggestions which were made.

The *Manchester Association* has been visiting the congregation at *Chorlton*. There was a profitable meeting and all who were present felt it was good to be there.

Good work has been reported by the "Sustentation Fund" Committee. They have made more than 50 grants to churches, and only regret that their resources are so limited that they cannot make more and larger grants. When we are thoroughly alive to our responsibilities we shall meet the demands upon us in a more generous way, and stimulate in a healthier way the life of our churches,

The *Bible Society* has made a national appeal for enlarged support on the centenary of its formation. Nearly all the Churches have united in response, and even the co-operation of the heretics has been sought and obtained. For who can resist the appeal to spread abroad a literature so grand and uplifting as is to be found between the covers of the Bible?

As time passes on our ranks are always being thinned by the hand of death. We note the passing away from us of the large-hearted *Dr. John Polley*, of *Belfast*, one of the stalwarts of Liberalism, and the staunchest of the friends of Freedom,—of *J. T. Preston*, of *London*, who, through a long and honoured life, has stood forth among the sturdiest of Unitarians and the warmest supporters of all our missionary movements—and of the gentle and pure-minded *G. Miller*, of *Bedford*, who for more than fourscore years lived a blameless and useful life, a blessing and a helper to all with whom he came in contact. Still we march forward. Warriors and saints drop out of our ranks, but the vacant places are filled, and we still go courageously on towards the City of God.

At the moment before going to press we hear with deep regret of the death of the *Rev. Joseph Freeston*, an honoured name among us for many years. It is not long since Mr. Freeston retired from the active ministry, and there are many living who think of him with gladness and gratitude for inspiration and comfort received at his hands. The brave worker returns home, bringing his sheaves with him.

March 21st, 1904. SCRUTATOR.

"Let parents bequeath to their children not riches but the spirit of reverence. We indeed fancy that they will inherit reverence from us if we rebuke them when they show a want of reverence. The best way of training the young is to train yourself at the same time: not to admonish them, but to be always carrying out your own principles in practice."—"PLATO'S LAWS."